

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, in light of the present amendments and following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 3-6 are pending. Claims 1 and 2 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 3, 4, and 5 are amended. Claim 6 is newly added. Support for the amendments to Claims 3 and 4 can be found in now-canceled Claim 1 and 2, for example. Support for the amendment to Claim 5 is self-evident. Support for newly added Claim 6 can be found in original Claims 1, 2, and 5, for example. No new matter is added. Amended independent Claim 3 recites the features of original Claims 1, 2 and 3. Amended independent Claim 4 recites the features of original Claims 1, 2, and 4.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1 and 5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious over Kasai (U.S. Patent Pub. 2003/0058199, herein "Kasai") in view of Okada (Japanese Patent No. 62,064,599, herein "Okada"). Claim 2 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious over Kasai and Okada in view of Koyama (U.S. Patent Pub. 2002/0113763, herein "Koyama") and Imawaka (Japanese Patent No. 411352936, "Imawaka") and further in view of Shibata (Japanese Patent Pub. JP410319373, herein "Shibata"). Claims 3 and 4 were indicated as reciting allowable subject matter.

Applicant notes with appreciation the indication that Claims 3 and 4 recite allowable subject matter.

Regarding the rejection of Claims 1 and 5 as obvious over Kasai in view of Okada and the rejection of Claim 2 as obvious over Kasai, Okada, Koyama, Imawaka, and Shibata, Applicant respectfully submits that as Claims 1 and 2 are canceled, the rejection with respect to these claims is moot.

Claims 3 and 4 are placed in independent form in accordance with the indication in the outstanding Office Action of allowable subject matter. Amended Claim 5 depends from

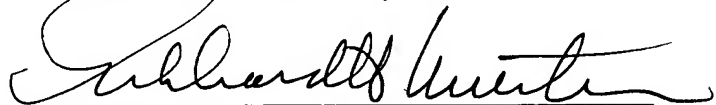
amended independent Claim 3. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that amended Claim 5 patentably distinguishes over any reasonable combination of the cited references for at least the same reasons as amended independent Claim 3 does.

Newly added dependent Claim 6 depends from amended independent Claim 4. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that newly added Claim 6 patentably distinguishes over any reasonable combination of the cited references for at least the same reasons as amended independent Claim 4 does.

Consequently, in light of the above discussion and in view of the present amendment, the present application is believed to be in condition for allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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